

Catechism Lesson for Adults and Teens
15th Sunday of Luke

Zacchaeus the Tax Collector

Read the Gospel Passage for this Sunday
Luke 19:1-10

Contextual Background:

-We know that Zacchaeus was short and a tax collector. As a tax collector, he was despised by his own people, as tax collector's (in order to get paid) took more than the fair share of people's money. He even confesses there were some people he cheated on taxes with.

-Running and climbing a tree wasn't something adults did back then or even now, so the crowd seeing Zacchaeus go to such measures was probably an odd and embarrassing thing to see. This was the length he went to see Jesus, in hope of finding hope in forgiveness and mercy.

Discussion Questions:

1. If you had been Zacchaeus when Jesus stopped and told him to come down, how would you have felt?
 - a. Flabbergasted
 - b. Embarrassed
 - c. Overwhelmed with joy
 - d. Afraid

2. Why do you think Jesus invited Himself to Zacchaeus' house?
 - a. He needed a place to stay
 - b. He wanted to talk to him about his shady business practices
 - c. He wanted to show everyone that Zacchaeus wasn't really a sinner
 - d. He wanted to help out "the little guy"
 - e. He knew that Zacchaeus was seeking salvation for him and his family

3. When have you felt like...
 - a. Jealous or betrayed like the crowd seeing Zacchaeus getting special treatment
 - b. Ashamed and outcast like Zacchaeus
 - c. Compassionate like Jesus

4. What most helps you to feel good about yourself?
 - a. To be treated as a person and not a category (or a sinner)
 - b. For people to spend time with me
 - c. For people to ignore the negative talk about me from the crowd
 - d. To be affirmed and encouraged when I make progress
 - e. To know that my body or bank account isn't what is important
 - f. To be assured and reminded that I am accepted by God
 - g. Other answers?

5. Jesus asks Zacchaeus to come into his house. Jesus makes the same offer to us.
 - a. How do we bring Christ into our home? Do we feel Jesus is invited into our home?
 - b. If we consider our heart a spiritual home for the things we love and spend time with, how then do we invite Jesus into our heart?

6. Zacchaeus realized he wasn't perfect and actually hurt some people. He promised to Jesus he would "restore" or make up for what he did to whoever he offended/hurt.
 - a. Who do we have to make amends to? Or what do we need to make amends for?
 - b. How do we make amends for those we offend or hurt?'

7. Jesus grants mercy to Zacchaeus by forgiving him and visiting him, and in turn Zacchaeus extends mercy to those he wronged by restoring them of their money and giving to the poor.
 - a. In what ways can we show mercy to others?
 - b. Who do we have difficulty showing mercy to?